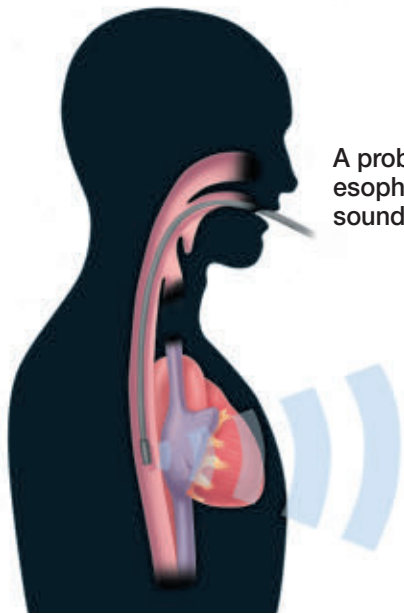
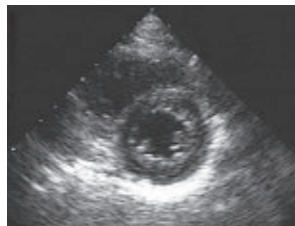


How TEE Works

A flexible tube about the size of your index finger is inserted into your mouth and down your esophagus. At the tip of the tube is a small probe that produces sound waves. The sound waves bounce off your heart and are changed into pictures on a video screen. The doctor can move the probe up, down, and sideways to look at different parts of your heart from different angles. Your throat is numbed, so you should feel little or no discomfort during the test.



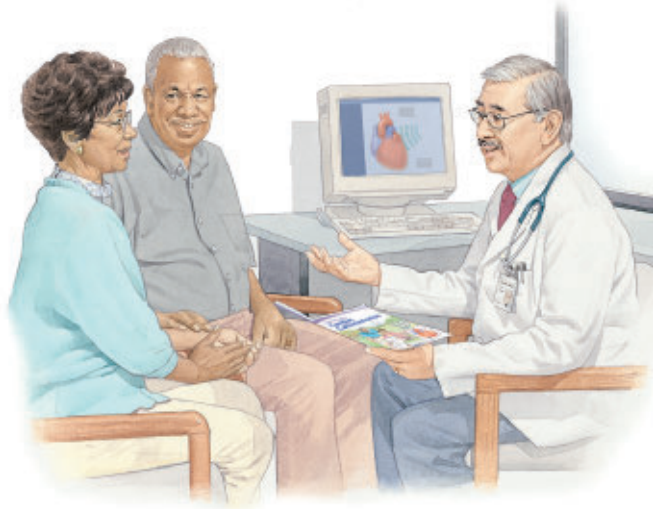
A probe in your esophagus sends sound waves.



Sound waves create images of your heart.

Finding Out the Results

Your doctor will discuss the results of the test with you. This may happen right after the test or at a later time. The results from TEE help you and your doctor plan treatment. If more information is needed to learn more about your heart, your doctor may recommend further testing.



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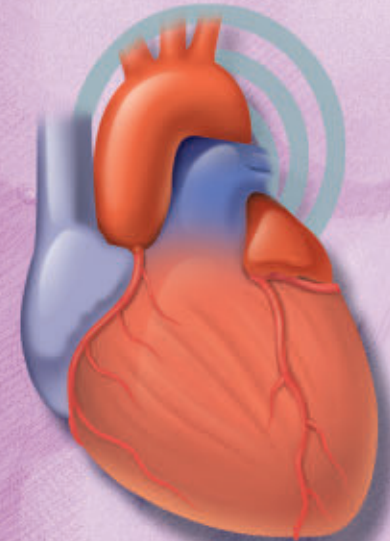
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TRANSESOPHAGEAL ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY (TEE)



**A Closer Look
at Your Heart**

What Is TEE?

Transesophageal echocardiography, or **TEE**, is a test that uses sound waves (ultrasound) to produce images of the heart. It is done from inside the esophagus (food pipe). The esophagus lies just behind the heart, so TEE gives clearer images than standard echocardiography taken from outside the chest. During TEE, harmless sound waves bounce (echo) off your heart. These sound waves create images of your heart on a video screen. The images are used to check how well your heart is pumping. They can also check for damaged walls or valves, infection, or blood clots inside your heart.

Before Your TEE

- Tell your doctor if you take any medications and ask if it's okay to take them before the test. Also mention if you have any health problems, such as an ulcer, a hiatal hernia, or trouble swallowing.
- Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any medications or sedatives.
- Stop eating and drinking before the test as directed. Take any prescribed medications with a sip of water only.
- Check with the doctor for arrival time. Allow plenty of time so you won't be late.
- Arrange to have an adult family member or friend pick you up after the test. Don't plan to drive yourself home, as you may be drowsy.
- Allow 1 to 2 hours from your arrival to the time you can leave.

During Your TEE

You may change into a hospital gown. You'll then go to the testing room. The test usually takes 10 to 30 minutes.

- If you wear dentures, you'll be asked to remove them. You'll be awake, but will be given medication through an IV line to help you relax. This is called conscious sedation. Your throat is sprayed with an anesthetic to numb it. You may also be given oxygen through a mask.
- You'll lie on your left side with your chin on your chest. A small plastic bite block will be put into your mouth to hold it open. The probe is then gently inserted through the bite block into your mouth. As you swallow, the tube is guided into your esophagus. The tube is lubricated to make it slide easily.
- You may feel the doctor moving the probe, but it shouldn't be painful or keep you from breathing. Your heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing will be monitored during the test.
- When the test is done, the probe and bite block are removed. You'll be watched until you're ready to go home.



Risks and Complications

- Problems swallowing or sore throat (usually go away within 24 hours)
- Injury to the mouth or esophagus
- Abnormal heart rhythms

After Your Test

- Avoid driving for as long as directed by your doctor.
- Your throat may still be numb for a few hours. Don't eat or drink during that time. Then start with small sips of water. If you can swallow the water easily, you can eat and drink normally.
- Your throat will be sore for a few hours.

Call Your Doctor If You Have:

- Trouble swallowing or a sore throat that lasts more than 24 hours
- Bleeding
- Internal pain
- Stiff neck